

Remarks

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated **May 11, 2007**. Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. The Office Action rejected claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 under 35 USC § 102(e) over Ouriel (US 2004/0117003); rejected claims 16, 18 and 19 under 35 USC § 103 over Ouriel; rejected claims 3, 10-15, 17 and 20 under 35 USC § 103 over Ouriel in view of Brown (US 6776793); rejected claim 6 under 35 USC § 103 over Ouriel in view of Orth (US 5591197); rejected claim 7 under 35 USC § 103 over Ouriel in view of Sequin (US 2003/0114912); and objected to claims 8 and 9 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but otherwise allowable.

By this Amendment, claims 1, 7, 9, 10, 18 and 20 are amended and claims 5, 6 and 8 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute all cancelled subject matter in a subsequent patent application claiming priority to the immediate application. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's request that Applicants differentiate between references cited in the IDS and identify specific references of greater importance, however, because this Amendment conforms the pending claims to subject matter that was indicated to be allowable, such differentiation and characterization of the cited references is believed to be unnecessary.

The MPEP does not require Applicants to distinguish between references cited in an IDS. See e.g. MPEP § 609.04(a) – Content Requirements for an IDS. Each cited reference was deemed relevant to the pending claims by the Applicants, and was therefore disclosed in accordance with the duty to disclose under 37 CFR § 1.56.

Applicants note that many rejections from the USPTO characterize prior art references in ways that Applicants would not expect. As such, Applicants believe that the public is best served when the USPTO Examiner makes the initial determination as to differential pertinency of the cited references. For example, the primary reference used in the Office Action to reject claims, Ouriel, is not necessarily a reference that Applicants would have identified as

being more pertinent than other references cited in the IDS.

Specification

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's request for cooperation in correcting specification errors. The specification has been reviewed and a number of minor errors are corrected herein, as indicated in the Amendments to the Specification section.

Allowable Subject Matter/Claim Rejections

Applicants acknowledge the Office Action's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 8 and 9. The limitations of allowable claim 8 have been incorporated into each of independent claims 1, 18 and 20. These amendments are made for the purpose of furthering prosecution, and do not comprise an acquiescence as to the validity of any rejection asserted in the Office Action. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute any cancelled subject matter in a subsequent patent application claiming priority to the immediate application

Applicants note that allowable claim 8 depended from claim 6, which in turn depended from claim 5. As such, the limitations of claims 5, 6 and 8 have been incorporated into independent claim 1, and claims 5, 6 and 8 have been cancelled. Claims 7, 9 and 10, each formerly dependent on a claim cancelled herein, are amended to depend from claim 1. Thus, claim 1 is directed to allowable subject matter. Claims 2-4, 7 and 9-17 depend from claim 1 and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons of claim 1.

Independent claims 18 and 20 have also been amended to include the limitations of allowable claim 8, and are therefore believed to be in condition for allowance. Claim 19 depends from claim 18 and is therefore allowable for at least the reasons of claim 18.

Each independent claim is now directed to subject matter indicated to be allowable. As such, the current rejections have been rendered moot. Accordingly, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejections identified in the Office Action.

Conclusion

Based on at least the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-4, 7 and 9-20 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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